

AMENDED CLAIM SET:

1. (currently amended) A liquid dispensing apparatus, comprising:

a container for containing a liquid, said container having a lid coupled to the container adapted to open and close about an opening/closing pivot part and a hook part that projects upward from the lid when the lid is closed;

~~a container setting part for setting [[a]] said container for containing a liquid, the container having a lid coupled to the container and adapted to open and close about an opening/closing pivot part, and a hook part that projects upward from the lid when the lid is closed; and~~

~~a dispensing mechanism part having a pipette for drawing and dispensing the liquid, a raising/lowering part for raising and lowering the pipette, a base for holding the raising/lowering part and provided with a projection part adapted to engage with the hook part, and a base driving part for moving the base, thereby enabling to act the pipette and the projection part at a to move to a suitable operational position,~~

~~wherein the base moves horizontally thereby the projection part opens the lid by abutting against the hook part and moving the hook part toward the pivot part side of the container and the~~

pipette is lowered to a position for dispensing a liquid into or aspirating a liquid from said container.

2. . (original) The liquid dispensing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the pipette has a pipette body and a liquid metering means provided to the pipette body for metering liquid.

3. (previously presented) The liquid dispensing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the raising/lowering part includes a pair of pulleys provided in vertically-spaced relationship at the base, a motor rotating/driving one of these pulleys, and a belt looped over these pulleys.

4. (previously presented) The liquid dispensing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the container for containing the liquid is at least one of a specimen container and a reagent container, and the container setting part is any one among a portion at which a rack for holding a plurality of specimen containers is placed, a portion to which the specimen container is

transferred by a transfer apparatus, and a portion at which a plurality of reagent containers are placed.

5. (previously presented) The liquid dispensing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the hook part projects upward from near the center of the lid and has an engaging portion approximately parallel to the pivot part.

6. (currently amended) The liquid dispensing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the projection part is adapted to extend such that the projection part engages with the hook part, and retract such that the projection part disengages from the hook part.

7. (original) The liquid dispensing apparatus as set forth in claim 6, wherein the projection part is a piston of an air cylinder attached to the base and actuated with working air supplied externally.

8. (original) The liquid dispensing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the projection part is a protrusion attached to the base.

9. (original) The liquid dispensing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the container is configured in such a way that the direction of the opening/closing of the lid is consistent with a specified direction when the container is set at the container setting part.

10. (cancelled).

11. (previously presented) The liquid dispensing apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the projection part retains the state of the lid opened.

12. (new) A liquid dispensing apparatus comprising:
a container for containing a liquid, said container having a lid;
a container setting part for setting said container; and

a dispensing mechanism part having a pipette for drawing and dispensing the liquid, a raising/lowering part for raising and lowering the pipette, a base for holding the raising/lowering part and provided with a projection part adapted to engage with the lid, and a base driving part for moving the base, thereby enabling the pipette and the projection part to move to a suitable operational position,

wherein the base moves horizontally thereby the projection part opens the lid by abutting against the lid and the pipette is lowered to a position for dispensing a liquid into or aspirating a liquid from said container.